

A
LETTER

From a Scholar in OXFORD,

To his Friend in the Countrey :

S H E W I N G

VVhat progresse the Visitors have made
in the Reformation of that *University*,
and what it is that obstructs it.



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*A Letter from a Scholar in OXFORD,
to his friend in the Countrey.*

Sir,

I Writ to you yesterday by your good friend Master P. but in such haste, and so abruptly, that it cannot in any measure answer either your expectation or my desires of satisfying you.

I know you must needs long to heare what Progresse is made in our Visitation: Truly so little, that I cannot well tell whether it be begun. Friday June 4. was designed for the day; and the Visitors from *London* had peremptorily resolved to be here, and were as confidently expected. But they were diverted by the unexpected newes of the Armies rebelling against the two Houses, together with a high Mutiny of the Garrison here (two dayes before the Visitors should have come downe) who not only refused to disband, but detained the 3500. l. which was sent downe to pay them upon their disbanding. The Parliament, while the money was upon the way hither, being informed that they meant not to disband, sent Post after the money, to have it brought back: but their messenger was too slow; for it was got into *Oxford* before he overtooke it: and the Garrison notwithstanding the Parliaments command, were resolved not to part with it. Whereupon the Convoy of Dragoones, who had guarded it from *London* hither, attempting to have it back againe, the Garrison-Souldiers fell upon them in the high street (the money standing loaden betwixt them) wounded many of them, and quickly beat them out of the Towne, leaving their money and their waggon & teeme of horses behind them.

This, with the high demands of the Army (which fell out very opportunely at the same time) made Sir *Nathaniel Brent*, and those other gentlemen which should have accompanied him hi-

ther, begin to look about them, and to be think themselves whether it were not better to keep in *London* then to adventure themselves at *Oxford* amongst a company of Malignant Scholars, and an Independent Garrison that had already put such an affront upon the Parliament: especially there being a great party of Horse the 1 lying quartered about *Ox.* sent from the Army to secure the Traine of Artillery here, upon an information that there was a designe to seize upon it, and remove it to *London*.

The result was, that (though on the Thursday following, June 3. *Merton* Colledge great gates were set wide open to receive them, and great preparations made for their entertainment there; and the poore Scholars generally quaking at the approach of their Doomesday, the rather in regard they had declared but three days before against the Covenant, yet) the Gentlemen came not. Only a Packet of letters was brought from them to the Ministers here, to let them know that they should not expect them till the long Vacation.

Hereupon we conceived (and we thought we had some reason for it) that the Visitation would be adjourned till that time: never imagining that the Ministers (especially considering the present Posture of Affaires) would have had the courage to undertake it themselves. Though by the way let me tell you, that had the rest all of them come, yet the University had beforehand resolved not to appear or submit to their Visitation, otherwise then with a [*Salvo nobis & Academia omnibus juribus, privilegiis, immunitatibus, &c.*] to be delivered to them in writing by the Proctors and Heads of Houses. Nay it was put to the question (but waved) whether we should appear at all: upon this supposed ground that they had no lawfull authority to visit us.

But the next morning, contrary to every bodies expectation, we understood that the * Ministers (forsooth) assisted by one
 M. Rogers. Master Dunce of Pizzy, Master Draper (a new-made justice, and
 A. Harris. a Committee-man for this County) and another of the *Willie-*
 A. Reyw'ds. sons, which three were come to towne for that purpose, supposing
 A. Wilkinson. the rest would have done the like (and indeed some others there
 A. Cheynell. were in Towne; one, I am certaine: but he thought it more
 prudence not to be scene among them) intended to proceed in
 the

the business. To be short (for I perceive I am already become tedious in my Relation) the bell rung out for the Visitation-Sermon; M. Harris preached it; the greatest part of the University were present.

Sermon ended (but it was very long first: for which we doe freely forgive him) we halted away (the Visitors following after more gravely & leisurely) to the Schooles: where the Vicechancellour, the Doctors and Proctors, with diverse other members of the University had attended (according to the Citation) from nine of the clock. No sooner were we come thither but the clock struck eleven; and I can assure you there was no foul play in it; for to prevent all cavill, the Vicechancellour, when he perceived it to draw towards eleven sent a command to the Sexton that he should be carefull to observe the Sun, and see that his clock kept pace with it exactly.

This faire advantage being thus unexpectedly offered us (for which we have none to thank but the Preacher, one of themselves) we thought we had no reason but to embrace it; and therefore, upon the striking of the clock, we enter'd immediately into the Convocation-House, and there declared (by the mouth of the Proctor; whereunto we have the attestation of a Publike Notary) that whereas by vertue of an Ordinance of the two Houses we had beene cited to appeare there this day between the houres of nine and eleven in the forenoone, we had obeyed: and because the time limited was now expired, we held our selves not obliged to any further attendance. Whereupon the Vicechancellour gave command that we should every man forthwith repaire home to our severall Colledges.

In our returne (the Vicechancellour and Doctors marching in a full body, with the Bedells before them) we met the Visitors just in the *Proscholium*; where the passage (you know) being somewhat narrow, one of the Bedells called to them [*roome for M. Vicechancellour*] whereupon they were pleased to deny *Selfe*, and gave the way. The Vicechancellour (very civilly) moved his cap to them, saying [*good morrow gentlemen; tis past eleven a clock*] and so passed on without taking any further notice of them. Upon this, there followed a great Humme, and so we parted; they holding on to their Visitation-House, and we home to dinner.

They sate about an houre that day (looking one upon another) and have met severall times since (M. Principall Rogers being Chair-man :) but what they doe when they are together, or how they put off the time I am not able to informe you : for, to tell you the plaine truth, we never heed them.

This carriage of ours they take very ill, and looke upon it as a high contempt. We, on the other side, thinke we are very well able to justifie what we have done ; and are of opinion that they are quite out, and must begin again, if they mean to doe any thing : conceiving that we are not bound to make any further appearance, unlesse we have a new Citation ; the former being rendered null through their default.

Sir, let me crave your Opinion of the Case, and your favourable acceptance of this impertinent Paper, that presumes thus to break in upon you, and disturb your thoughts, which (doubtlesse) are now fixed upon a businesse of much greater concernment, the present contestation between the two Houses and the Army. However, I doe not at all doubt but you will pardon this injury, when you shall finde that it is done you by

Oxford. June 25. 1647.

Your very affectionate Friend.

Post.

P O S T - S C R I P T .

Yesterday Doctor Shelden and Doctor Hammond (two of His Majesties Chaplaines) went from hence towards Saint Albans, upon a command sent them to come and attend their Master : a favour which he had long begged of the two Houses, and hath now (it seemes) obtained it of the Army. Whereas Master Cheynell here is very angry, and stormes extremely, if any body cared for it. The poore man, God helpe him, hath utterly lost his patience, and (truly I am afraid) something else.

THE END.